



UNITY IN FARRIERY – A LEONARDO DA VINCI SUPPORTED PROJECT

Historically, there have been differences throughout Europe in the way horses have been kept and used, and as a result European farriers have been trained to work differently and to use different horse shoes and tools. Nowadays, horses are kept and used in similar ways all over Europe, and there is less reason for national differences.

The European Federation of Farriers Associations' mission is to improve the welfare of the horse by encouraging the highest standards of trimming and shoeing, and it felt that one way of doing this was to develop common basic standards of farriery to which all European nations should aspire. In undertaking this work EFFA sought, and was granted, financial assistance from the European Commission's Leonardo da Vinci funds.

The first project involved developing common standards, and getting the agreement of member associations that these were appropriate minimum criteria for individuals who wished to practise farriery on a self-employed basis. These common standards were agreed in 2002, since when those nations that felt that they matched up to the requirements could ask to have their national training and examination systems accredited

against the EFFA standards. By 2009, Switzerland, Holland, Great Britain, Austria, Finland, Denmark and the Czech Republic had all been accredited, while two nations had been assessed as not yet being up to standard.

The second project was started in 2004 and finished in 2008. It involved:

- taking these standards, and reviewing and revising them in the light of experience in using them (minor changes have been made)
- investigating whether to set up EFFA examinations in addition to national examinations (for the time being this is thought to be too difficult)
- developing a training manual for use in training farriers to achieve the EFFA standards (currently available in French and English, and being translated into other languages)
- publicising the existence of the EFFA standards

Those national associations whose training and examinations have been accredited as meeting the EFFA standards are now able to put their members forward for recognition as Certified Euro-Farriers, as described elsewhere on this website.

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